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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the verdict today of Denis Rivera, age 22; Oscar Antonio Grande, age 22; Ismael Juarez Cisneros, age 26; and Oscar Alexander Garcia-Orellana, age 32, all members of the MS-13 gang, on charges stemming from the murder of Brenda Paz, a 17-year-old federal witness. Rivera and Garcia-Orellana were found not guilty of all charges. Grande and Cisneros were found guilty of all charges and could face the death penalty. Those charges include conspiracy to tamper with a witness, conspiracy to retaliate against a witness, killing a person aiding a federal investigation, tampering with a witness and retaliating against a witness. The Honorable Gerald Bruce Lee, United States District Judge, will call the jury back to begin the penalty phase on Monday, May 23, 2005.

Brenda Paz was murdered to prevent her testimony at trial on a murder of a suspected rival gang member in a federal park south of the Reagan National Airport in September 2001, and in retaliation for her prior cooperation with law enforcement against the violent street gang, Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13).

Mr. McNulty stated, "Gang violence in Northern Virginia is becoming one of our most pressing crime problems. Today's guilty verdicts are a major step forward for the cause of justice and a step closer to victory in our battle against gang violence. Brenda Paz was 17 years old, pregnant and a witness in a federal investigation when she was brutally murdered. Our law enforcement agencies are united in their commitment to defeat this threat of ruthless violence in our community".

Mr. McNulty thanked the Shenandoah Sheriff's Office; Virginia State Police; Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County and Montgomery County Police Departments; United States Park Police; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; United States Marshals Service; Arlington County and Fairfax County Sheriff's Departments; the 10th District Task Force, and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement for their efforts in bringing this case to a successful conclusion.

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